

Kidd, H. B. (Bert)

Rum-running days, sinking recalled
Continued

They had just made it to harbor, when the ship sank, the crew taking to the water. It was a rough day. "I nearly drowned before I was picked up."

The British consul was left to sort out the problem of the lost tug with its owners.

Kidd also recalls early aerial bombing exercises carried out by aircraft of the fleet air arm dropping small bags of flour on the

Lowestoft. "They made a lot of hits too, just dropping them over the side of their cockpits. What a mess for us to clean up and hose down."

H.M.S. Colombo arrived at Vancouver after a long sea voyage. Kidd had now served for nine years.

"I was fed up with extended sea service by this time," said Kidd, now a petty officer, and in 1929 he jumped ship, going ashore at Vancouver and not returning.

"I took a shot at rum-running from Vancouver to Santiago and San Pedro, California. We used to pick up supplies at New Westminster and lug 'em down the coast."

The U.S. Coastguard eventually caught the smugglers, "just after the time the 'I'm alone' got into trouble and was sunk outside the 12-mile limit on the Atlantic side. It was quite a schemozzle."

Coastguard waiting

"We were coming in through fog and heard two blasts from a siren. It used to be the signal to pick up the tender lying there to take the cargo to shore. When we came out of the fog the U. S. Coastguard was there waiting. We were caught with our pants down."

The coastguard fired on their vessel and the crew jumped overboard and swam for shore. fog, Kidd stayed in the United States a few weeks longer, working in Los Angeles as an usher in a theatre. Immigration authorities caught up with him and, as he was a British subject, he was sent over the border to Canada near Vancouver.

He worked on a farm at Saanich, or Vancouver Island, and at the famous Butchard's Gardens — for 25 cents an hour.

Kidd decided he should return to his native England and saved up enough money for a ticket to Montreal. There, he intended seeking a job as a crewman on a cattle boat.

Belleville stop

"I got as far as Belleville and stopped awhile." It was in Belleville that he met Eva, whom he married. "I stayed."

In Belleville, he worked in the poultry business until he got a job with a Canadian Oil Company. He stayed with them until his retirement several years ago.

From the time of his last voyage to Vancouver, Kidd has never returned to England. "I never had any yen too," he said, although he still subscribes to the East Anglian Magazine, published in Ipswich, Suffolk.

He also retains crystal clear memories of his early life in England before going to sea.

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